



**Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee**

**February 28, 2013**

**Public Hearing**

**Testimony**

**By**

**Rich Gray**

**Executive Vice President for Administration & Chief Financial Officer**

**University of Connecticut**

The University of Connecticut is pleased to submit testimony on the Governor's Bill 844, An Act Implementing the Budget Recommendations of the Governor concerning Higher Education.

There are two significant pieces of the Governor's proposal that impact UConn: (1) the establishment of the Governor's Scholarship, and (2) the inclusion of fringe benefits in the UConn block grant.

First, with regard to the Governor's Scholarship proposal, I believe that this to be a positive and fair change in the distribution of state scholarships. At every opportunity it is important to maximize scholarship funds in our collective efforts to attract and retain top students and help them attain degrees. UConn's financial aid office will continue to work with the administration to clarify any questions about this program.

Second, I would like to address the change in the block grant to UConn. The block grant is very important to how the university operates, and this proposal transforms our grant into a true block grant which UConn supports in concept. In the future it will provide significantly more flexibility and ensures the university's academic freedom. UConn continues to have questions, but is actively working with the administration to address them.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on legislation that the University of Connecticut believes overall is a positive step forward for Connecticut students.